



THE DATUM POINT

Newsletter of the
NORTHERN VIRGINIA CHAPTER OF THE
ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF VIRGINIA

Chapter Website – www.nvcasv.org

May 2013

FROM THE PRESIDENT – JACK HRANICKY

Hopefully, the national sequester is not affecting archaeology, but museums may get funding cuts, namely the Smithsonian. Several exhibits are being closed, and there are no plans to create new ones. We will have to weather out this money-problem era. We have had them in the past.

If you want to visit a park where you can literally get lost, go to the Banshee Reeks (Scottish for hill) park in Loudoun County. It is a 700+ acre park in the middle of the now megatropolis county. The park is full of trails, a historic plantation, forest, wetlands, fishing ponds, and much more. It is the headquarters for Loudoun County archaeology. The plantation house is only open one weekend a month.

Also, you might subscribe to Discovery magazine. It almost always has articles about worldwide archaeology. The May issue has an article on our hominid ancestors' use of fire. It argues another 200,000 years, pushing back the time table to one million years for fire. The article features the work in South Africa's Wonderwerk cave. Was fire borrowed from a forest fire, assuming the early barbeque, or was this the discovery of firemaking? Or, as per usual, more work is needed.

May 8th Presentation

COLONIAL SURVEYING

By CHAS LANGELAN



Chas Langelan is a retired professional land surveyor with licenses in Maryland and the District of Columbia. He practiced more than 40-years in Washington DC and ran a busy survey office on Capitol Hill before retiring in 2008. A past-president of both DCALS and MSS, Chas currently serves on the Boards of five professional organizations. He was the first private land surveyor ever registered by DC.

CELEBRATE FAIRFAX!

Celebrate Fairfax! is a great opportunity for ASV/Northern VA Chapter members to promote archaeology in the county. The County Board of Supervisors created "Celebrate Fairfax!" in 1984 to celebrate the County of Fairfax and its various communities.

The event traces its history back to colonial times when the Virginia House of Burgesses mandated that an annual Fair be held to promote commerce, economic development and a sense of community.

The Northern Virginia Chapter of the Archaeological Society of Virginia will be hosting an exhibit booth at "Celebrate Fairfax!" and all ASV Chapter Members are invited to volunteer to staff the booth.

According to its promoters, Celebrate Fairfax! Northern Virginia's largest community-wide celebration, will run June 7-9, 2013 at the Fairfax County Government Center. Presented by Celebrate Fairfax, Inc., the annual festival hosts tens of thousands of visitors during the three-day run.

The 25-acre site is magically filled with fascinating sights and sounds of more than 300 exhibitors, food vendors, crafters and interactive activities. Celebrate Fairfax! Show cases live concerts on eight stages, ExxonMobil Children's Avenue, a petting zoo, the Fairfax County Karaoke Championship, carnival rides, and great festival foods. Another fun activity for kids is the Inova Train Ride to Good Health.

Nightly fireworks, presented by SAIC, are a highlight of the festival, and one of many great family programs. This year's Bud Light Main Stage features top national headline performers: The B-52s, Spin Doctors and the Summerland Tour 2013 - Alternative Guitars starring Everclear, Live, Filter and Sponge!

A recipient of one of the International Festivals and Events Association's top honors, Celebrate Fairfax was named a Bronze Pinnacle Award winner in 2005 for its long-time quality and success. The

festival was also a 2006 honoree as one of the Top 20 events in the Southeastern United States.

For more information on any of the festival's programs, or to become a part of the festival as a [volunteer](#), [sponsor](#), [performing artist](#), or simply to attend, please browse our website, or contact the Celebrate Fairfax, Inc. office at 703-324-FAIR (3247).

Frequently asked questions about the event can be found on our [FAQ page](#). Celebrate Fairfax! affords Chapter Members a great opportunity to tell their friends and neighbors about their favorite endeavor.

In order to assure adequate volunteers to staff the exhibit we ask that you indicate your interest now by selecting a time slot you can fill during Celebrate Fairfax!

The ASV Northern Virginia Chapter will be staffing its exhibit during the following hours:

___ 10am-1pm, Saturday, June 8th

___ 1pm-4pm, Saturday, June 8th

___ 4pm-7pm, Saturday, June 8th

___ 11am-2pm, Sunday, June 9th

___ 2pm-5pm, Sunday, June 9th

___ 5pm-7pm, Sunday, June 9th

Please indicate the time slots you can volunteer in an email to Steve Kimbel at stevekimbel@gmail.com by Wednesday, May 15th.

We hope as many of you as possible will be able to tell our Fairfax County friends and neighbors and all the visitors at "Celebrate Fairfax!" about your interest in archaeology and why they may wish to share in your enthusiasm for rediscovering the past.

Old Colchester Park and Preserve

By Megan Veness

Kayla M. has been working hard to expose and excavate a large burned soil deposit near the Roydson Driveway at OCPP. This feature has interesting artifacts dating to the mid-eighteenth century, ranging from Whieldon clouded ware ceramics, to a large number of white clay 5/64ö bore smoking pipes. There were also many oyster shell and metal fragments discovered during excavation. All of the feature soil was saved for water screen processing through window mesh and ¼ö screens, so smaller artifacts should be recovered after it is processed in the lab.

Jonathan B. discovered a large post-hole beneath a buried cultural horizon containing colonial artifacts indicating it could be related to the öold buildingö marked on a 1950s map. Already the artifacts from Colchester are arriving at the lab in buckets for washing and processing. Not only are they plentiful, but they are incredibly interesting from the small to the large. Once the window mesh material comes to the lab it will be time to screen it into ¼ö and into pickings. The work in the lab is about to get varied, even more exciting, and we can always use help.

We continue to work hard on forming an adequate access database. No system is perfect and within the archaeological community it seems little find complete satisfaction with their cataloging systems. A lot of trial and error has led us down a continually improving path. Microsoft Access will allow us the ability to do analysis and queries in extremely helpful ways. Marion has continued to be an invaluable addition to our staff. She has cleaned up our mapping within GIS, prepared different kinds of projects on the park, and ultimately provided us with some great analysis.

AutoCAD has also become a great addition to our software allowing us to do accurate vector drawings that we so desperately needed. It is not only necessary for our architectural historian, but AutoCAD works well with the GIS programs, and will allow us to do the measured drawings of plan views and profiles. The possibilities these programs

provide is endless and it will be exciting to see what else we can produce in order to accurately assess and portray Old Colchester Park and Preserve.

Come join CART for our open house on June 1st, 2013 from 10 am until 2 pm. Several units will be open to view and CART staff members will be available to answer any questions. Charles Smith, FCPA naturalist, will also be providing a tour of plant and animal life throughout Old Colchester Park and Preserve. Letö hope for a beautiful spring day!

We welcome volunteers in the field and lab every week, so please join us in unit excavation or processing artifacts in the lab. Learn or add your knowledge. There is plenty of work to do in both the lab and field! Visit our blog at <http://cartarchaeology.blogspot.com> to stay updated on CARTö progress and to sign up to volunteer! You can also email us at cart.volunteers@live.com.



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